


<b>GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE</b>	Transmittal # 24-1	Policy # 8.34
Applicability: {x} All DJJ Staff { } Administration { } Community Services { } Secure Facilities	Related Standards & References: O.C.G.A. §§ 35-8-1, 49-4A-8(i)(2) DJJ 3.18, 8.5, 3.41 ACA Standards: 3-JDF-3A-29, 4-JCF-2A-28	
Chapter 8: SAFETY, SECURITY, AND CONTROL	Effective Date: 3/7/24	
Subject: Firearms	Scheduled Review Date: 3/7/25	
Attachments:	Replaces: 8/8/23	
None	APPROVED:   <hr/> Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb, Commissioner	

## I. POLICY:

The Commissioner will issue authorization in writing for those staff members approved to use and carry firearms. Firearms shall always be used in accordance with Georgia law and in accordance with the certification course approved by the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council.

## II. DEFINITIONS:

**Authorized Employees:** An employee who has received authorization from the Commissioner to carry a firearm.

**Reasonable Cause:** An assessment by supervisory staff that an authorized employee's physical and/or emotional condition may be impaired to the extent that judgment or motor skills may negatively impact the ability to safely and proficiently handle a weapon.

**DJJ Firearms Training Officer:** Any staff that has successfully completed the 80-hour POST Firearm instructor course.

**Armorer:** Personnel that successfully completed the 80-hour POST Firearm instructor course and received the eight-hour GLOCK Armorer training.

**POST:** Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council.

**O.C.G.A. § 35-8-1:** Georgia law which covers Employment and Training of Peace Officers.

## III. GENERAL PROCEDURES:

- A. Firearms are not permitted in secure facilities except in emergency situations as approved by the Commissioner.

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- B. Authorized employees, while on duty, will carry their DJJ state issued Badge and DJJ Sworn Identification in accordance with DJJ 2.17, Issuance of Badges, and DJJ 22.1, Sworn Law Enforcement ID Cards.
- C. Authorized employees, while on duty, will carry only the DJJ authorized firearm(s).
- D. To receive authorization from the Commissioner to carry a firearm, the employee must be certified through the POST Basic Law Enforcement training (BLE) or POST Parole/Probation Basic Training Course.
- E. Firearms Safety
  - 1. Authorized employee will handle DJJ authorized firearms as trained whether on or off duty. Under no circumstances are warning shots to be fired.
  - 2. Authorized employee will maintain safe and secure storage of the DJJ authorized firearm.
  - 3. Weapons stored in an automobile must be secured in the trunk of the vehicle. If a vehicle has an installed trunk vault, weapons will be secured in the vault.
  - 4. Failure to take reasonable precautionary measures to ensure the security of the weapon may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, as well as a requirement to reimburse the agency for the cost of replacing the weapon if it is damaged, lost, or stolen.
  - 5. If a firearm is lost, stolen, or damaged, it must be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor in accordance with DJJ 8.5, Special Incident Reporting. The supervisor must report the event to the Deputy Commissioner or Director of Investigation. If a firearm is lost or stolen, the employee to whom the weapon is assigned will report the event to the local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the area where the employee believes the weapon was lost or stolen. Additionally, the employee will work with the Office of Investigations to obtain a police report, and a copy of the report shall be submitted to the employee's supervisor and the Property Control Unit. The employee to whom the weapon is assigned may also be required to participate in the recovery of the weapon, swear out a warrant, and assist in prosecution in coordination with the Office of Investigations, to the extent such action is warranted.
  - 6. A supervisor or firearms instructor may temporarily revoke the authorization to carry a firearm and seize and secure a weapon when reasonable cause exists. The appropriate Director/Deputy Commissioner, through the chain of command, shall be notified. If the situation and time allows, the weapon should be secured by a supervisor, firearms instructor, or investigator who is in a sworn position and has been trained in the safe handling of firearms.

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7. An authorized employee shall notify their immediate supervisor when any conditions exist that could affect the safe and proficient handling of a firearm in the performance of their assigned duties.
8. A record of all firearms, to include the type, description, model, serial number and name of the employee to whom the firearm is assigned shall be maintained by the Property Control Unit.

F. Care of Firearms

All authorized employees shall keep their firearms clean and in good operating condition. Authorized employees' weapons are subject to inspection at any time by a superior officer. No unauthorized alterations shall be made to DJJ firearms.

G. Ammunition

All weapons will be loaded with DJJ issued ammunition. All ammunition shall be factory manufactured. The carrying or discharging of reloaded ammunition must be approved or provided by the Director of the Office of Professional Development.

H. Weapon Display

1. DJJ authorized employees should avoid the unnecessary removal of the weapon from the holster except when there is justification for its use to accomplish a proper police purpose.
2. Under Georgia law, an authorized sworn DJJ employee (law enforcement) is authorized to carry an issued or authorized firearm while on-duty and based on the authorization of the Commissioner.
3. Firearms will be carried in the issued holsters.
4. Authorized employees are prohibited from carrying firearms while consuming alcohol, while still under its influence, while under the influence of any control substance, illegal drugs, or any combination of drugs or alcohol which causes impairment for the authorized employees performing their duties.
5. Plainclothes personnel shall carry their weapons in a non-conspicuous manner in public, unless otherwise warranted.

I. Discharging Firearms

1. Whenever any member of DJJ discharges a state issued firearm for any purpose other than training or qualification, they shall submit a report to the

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Commissioner through the chain of command in accordance with DJJ 8.5, Special Incident Reporting. The report will include:

- a) The number of shots fired and the reason and circumstances that required the use of firearms.
- b) The names and addresses of any injured persons and witnesses. The extent of injuries, treatment required, location of treating hospital, and the name of attending physician providing treatment, if known.
- c) A description of any property damage resulting from the discharge of a firearm and an estimate of repair costs, if known.

#### J. Surrendering Weapons

No authorized employee shall ever give up any of their weapons to an unauthorized individual unless it is absolutely necessary to protect the life of a citizen or themselves.

#### K. DJJ Armament Check-out Procedures

1. All weapons and equipment approval/check-out will be handled by the armory officer as follows:
  - a) Authorized employees will be issued their firearm as a part of their equipment on a 24 hour/7 day a week basis. The weapon, type, and serial number will be noted on the sign-out ledger. No weapon will be removed from the vault, for any reason, without being signed out.
  - b) The armorer and the authorized employee will both sign the ledger, noting the date and time.
  - c) Any ammunition removed will also be noted on a separate line in the ledger.
2. All weapons or equipment shall be returned to the DJJ arms vault using the following procedure:
  - a) Weapons will be checked in when the authorized employee is no longer required to have a weapon in order to perform their duties, whether for disciplinary reasons, the specific job title is changed or they no longer are employed.
  - b) Weapons will be cleaned and wiped free of dirt, moisture and harmful residue before being replaced in the vault.

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- c) The weapon and/or ammunition will be placed in the proper storage area and the date and time noted in the ledger.
  - d) Equipment will be returned in the same condition as issued.
- 3. Any weapon or equipment that has been discharged or damaged will be reported to the Armorer by completing a Special Incident Report (SIR) with copies to the Commissioner and the DJJ Firearms Training Officer (weapon only).
- 4. The armory officer receiving the weapon will inspect it for cleanliness and functioning before returning it to the arms vault. Problems with any weapon not passing inspection will be corrected by the officer, if possible, and re-inspected by the Armorer.
- 5. The damaged weapon(s) will be tagged for repair and returned to the vault. Repair tags must remain in place and the weapon not used until the repair has been made. Repair tags will be kept in the vault for this purpose.
- 6. Employees are prohibited from any unauthorized modification, or disassembly beyond normal field stripping for cleaning purposes, of any authorized issued firearm. Only certified Armorer may disassemble weapons beyond field stripping for inspection and/or worn parts.

#### L. Weapons Qualification

- 1. The DJJ Firearms Training Officers authorized by the Office of Professional Development shall be responsible for implementing firearms qualification programs, classroom instruction, and remedial training for DJJ personnel.
- 2. The Armorer shall be responsible for ensuring all DJJ issued firearms are maintained in good working order. Upon notification from any officer that a weapon is malfunctioning, the Armorer shall repair the weapon or issue another.

#### M. Qualification Requirements

- 1. Only an authorized sworn DJJ employee (i.e. POST certified BLE, POST certified through Probation/Parole Basic Training Course) shall be authorized to carry a DJJ authorized firearm in an official capacity or to exercise the power of arrest.
- 2. Firearms training shall consist of both classroom and practical exercises as determined by the training officer.
- 3. Failure of any recruit to qualify will result in dismissal or reassignment. Minimum qualification scores shall be as approved by POST.

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4. All authorized employees shall train with their DJJ authorized firearm(s), at a minimum, semi-annually and successfully complete one POST certified qualification. Each authorized employee will be given three (3) opportunities to qualify.
5. Any authorized employee who fails to attain a qualifying score shall attend a block of remedial instruction and shall attempt to qualify after that instruction.
6. After remedial training, an authorized employee will be given three opportunities to re-qualify; however, two qualifications must be consecutive.
7. Should the authorized employee still not qualify, they will be afforded an opportunity, on a voluntary basis, to receive additional instruction and qualify with the weapon within two weeks.
8. The course of instruction and final qualification must be completed within two weeks after the officer's failure to qualify.
9. Any officer unable to qualify, after the above avenues or retraining have been exhausted, will be considered incompetent to carry a firearm, removed from enforcement duties, and subject to appropriate administrative or disciplinary action. The Commissioner's authorization for the officer to carry a firearm will be automatically revoked.

**N. Firearms Training**

1. Firearms training and qualification shall consist of the following:
  - a) Classroom instruction on the fundamentals of semi-automatic firing.
  - b) Classroom instruction in firearms safety and preventive maintenance.
  - c) Classroom instructions in the legal aspects of firearms use, to include the Use of Deadly Force.
  - d) Range practice and qualification with the issued /authorized weapon(s).
  - e) Supplemental classroom instruction or practical exercises as may be deemed necessary or useful.
  - f) Weapon Retention Training.

**IV. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED: NO**